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147
512 saddles, practise every thing, in short, fatiguing to
526 the hands or feet. But if they indulge themselves with an intermission of these employments, they ride horseraces for a sword which is given to him who reaches the goal first. Another very common game amongst the Abipones is one which they play on foot. The instrument with which it is performed is a piece of wood about two hands long, rounded like a staff, thicker at the extremities and slenderer in the middle. This piece of wood they throw to the mark, with a great effort, in such a manner that it strikes the ground every now and then, and rebounds, like the stones which boys throw along the surface of a river. Fifty and often a hundred men stand in a row and throw this piece of wood by turns, and he who flings it the farthest and the straightest obtains the sword.

This game, which from boys they are accustomed to play at for hours together, amuses and fatigues them with wonderful benefit to their
[411] health. The same piece of wood which serves both as an instrument of peace and war, is made formidable use of by many of the savages to crush the bodies of their enemies and of wild
● [18] beasts. The Abipones hate to lead the life of
147 a snail, idle and listless, and consequently do
512 not undergo a swift and miserable decay, like those who are stupefied with sloth, confined to

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their bed, table, or gaming-table, and seldom stir out into the street or country. The Abiponian women, though debarred from the sports and equestrian contests of the men, have scarce time to rest or breathe, so much are they occupied day and night with the management of their domestic affairs. Hence that masculine vigour of the females in producing almost gigantic offspring, hence their strength and longevity.

The food also to which the Abipones are accustomed, in my judgment contributes not a little to prolong their lives. What Tacitus says of the ancient Germans is applicable to them: *Cibi simplices, agrestia poma, recens fera, aut lac concretum, sine apparatu, sine blandimentis expellunt famem.* They feed, as chance directs, upon beef, or the flesh of wild animals, mostly roasted, but seldom boiled. If the plain afford them no wild beasts to hunt, the water will supply their hunger with various kinds of fish besides otters, ducks, capibaris, &c. From the air also they receive birds that are by no means to be despised, and from the woods divers fruits, to appease the cravings of appetite. Should all these be wanting, roots concealed beneath the ground or the water are converted into food. Necessity alone will induce them to taste fishes, though excellent. Tigers' flesh, spite of its vile odour, is in such esteem amongst them that if

[A = Probably the JAGUAR is MEANT HERE --- ANALYST]

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That health of body depends in a high degree upon tranquillity of mind is incontestible: the functions of the brain are disturbed, the stomach grows languid, the strength fails for want of food, and the better juices are destroyed, when the mind is oppressed by turbulent affections, by anxiety, love, fear, anger, or sadness. The body will be sane if inhabited by a sane mind. This being the case, we cannot wonder that the Abipones are possessed of great vigour and longevity. Their minds are generally in a tranquil state. They live reckless of the past, little curious about the present, and very seldom anxious for the future. They fear danger, but either from not perceiving or from despising the weightiness of it, always think themselves able to subdue or avoid it. When a numerous foe is announced to be at hand they either provide for their safety by a timely flight, or await the assault, and amidst jocund songs quaff mead, their elixir, which inspires them with courage, and banishes fear. Gnawing cares about the augmentation of their property, or concerning food and raiment, have no place amongst them. They make no mortal of such account as to die, or run mad, for hate or love of him. No affections with them are either violent or of long duration. This tranquillity

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night-fall an Abiponian boy brought an iron bridle, an axe, and some other trifles, the treasures of his family, to be guarded in my house. On being asked the reason of his doing so, he replied that the enemies would arrive in the night; for so it had been predicted by his mother, a famous juggler, who declared that whenever the enemy was approaching, she felt a pricking sensation in her left arm. "Oh!" replied I, "you may attribute that to the fleas, my good lad. I can tell you this on my own experience. Day and night I feel my left and my right arm too, as well as other parts of my body, insolently pricked and stung by fleas. If that were an indication of the enemy, we should never be free from their attacks night or day." But my words were vain; for the report of the old woman's presage got abroad, and disturbed the whole town all night. Yet, as often happened, no sign or vestige of the enemy appeared.

The Abipones, whom the desire of booty or glory induces to be constantly scheming war against others, are, in consequence, never free from suspicions of machinations against themselves. The more ardently they desire to take measures for their safety, the more readily do they believe themselves in danger from others, and generally for some foolish reason.

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181 A light rumour, smoke seen from a distance,
649 strange foot-marks, or the unseasonable barking of dogs, fills them with suspicions that their lives are in danger from the enemy, especially when they dread their vengeance for slaughters which themselves have lately committed. The
756 task of tranquillizing and preparing their minds
787 devolves upon the jugglers, who, whenever any thing is to be feared, or any thing to be done, consult the evil spirit. About the beginning of the night a company of old women assemble in a huge tent. The mistress of the band, an old woman remarkable for wrinkles and grey hairs, strikes every now and then two large discordant drums, at intervals of four sounds, and whilst these instruments return a horrible bellowing, she, with a harsh voice, mutters kinds of songs, like a person mourning. The
[533] surrounding women, with their hair dishevelled and their breasts bare, rattle gourds, and loudly chaunt funeral verses, which are accompanied by a continual motion of the feet, and tossing about of the arms. But this infernal music is rendered still more insupportable by other performers, who keep constantly beating pans which are covered with deers' skin, and sound very acutely, with a stick. In this manner the night is passed. At day-break all flock to the old woman's tent, as to a Delphic oracle. The singers receive little presents, and

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CHAPTER XI.

OF THE DIVISION OF THE ABIPONIAN NATION, OF THEIR PAUCITY, AND OF THE CHIEF CAUSES THEREOF.

To look for policy in savages will appear to you like seeking a knot in a bulrush, or expecting water from a flint. The Abipones, a nation obstinately attached to their ancient liberty, lived at their own pleasure, impatient of all controul. Their own will was their sole law. Nevertheless, as bees, ants, and every kind of animal, by natural instinct, observe certain peculiarities of their species, in like manner the most ferocious Indians pertinaciously retain, even to this day, certain customs, the ordinances of their nation, handed down to them by their ancestors, and regarded by them as laws. I shall proceed to treat of the political, economical, and military regulations of the Abipones, of their customs and magistrates.

The whole nation of the Abipones is divided into three classes: the Riikahès, who inhabit extensive plains; the Nakaigetergehes, who love the lurking-holes of the woods; and lastly, the Yaaucanigas, who were formerly a distinct [197] NATION, and used A separate LANGUAGE.

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despair of escape, inspires the naturally fearful with courage, which a Lacedemonian would admire, and which Europe desires to see in her warriors.

Moreover, being lovers of liberty and roving, they choose to own no law, and bind themselves to their cacique by no oaths of fidelity. Without leave asked on their part, or displeasure evinced on his, they remove with their families whithersoever it suits them, and join some other cacique; and when tired of the second, return with impunity to the horde of the first. This is quite common, and a matter of surprize to no one that knows how fleeting is the faith, how mutable the will of the Indians. Should a report be spread by uncertain or suspicious authors, that the enemy are coming in a few days, it is enough. Numbers, dreading the loss of life more than of fame, will desert their cacique, and hasten with their families to some well-known retreats. Lest however they should be branded with the name of deserters and cowards, they say they are going out to hunt. Hence, whenever we priests had to defend the new colonies filled with savage assailants, and almost destitute of inhabitants to repel them, we generally made more use of craft and threats than of force. The danger, or the fear of it, being dissipated, these fugacious heroes at length came home, no

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retreats, and think themselves richer in being foes than friends to the Spaniards. For, as I have often heard them complain, they found war with the Christians more to their advantage than peace. In times of declared enmity, they acquired by arms what, when peace was established, they failed of obtaining by prayers. The most eloquent teacher of God's word will do but little good in Paraguay, unless he be liberal in clothing and feeding his disciples. Should an angel descend from Heaven to make the Abipones acquainted with God and his commandments, if he should come empty handed, unprovided with clothes, food, and other gifts, it would be all in vain, he would scarce obtain a hearing. Were the blackest demon to come up from hell, and offer them chests full of clothes, food, knives, scissars, rings, and glass-beads, he would be called captain, and find all the Abipones tractable and obedient. If you ask me why the Americans have not all been induced to embrace Christianity, I will tell you the reason. It is chiefly owing to the pernicious examples of the old Christians, and to their want of liberality to the Indians; the former deter them from embracing our religion, while the latter renders them apostates to it. Another cause is to be found in the

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and forced to hasten their flight. All these things the Abipones do, and suffer without ever complaining, or uttering an expression of impatience, unlike Europeans, who, at the smallest inconvenience, get out of humour, grow angry, and since they cannot bend heaven to their will, call upon hell. What we denominate patience is nature with them. Their minds are habituated to inconvenience, and their bodies almost rendered insensible by long custom, even from childhood. While yet children they imitate their fathers in piercing their breasts and arms with sharp thorns, without any manifestation of pain. Hence it is, that when arrived at manhood, they bear their wounds without a groan, and would think the compassion of others derogatory to their fortitude. The most acute pain will deprive them of life before it will extort a sigh. The love of glory, acquired by the reputation of fortitude, renders them invincible, and commands them to be silent.

Most of the observations I have just been making apply both to men and women, although the latter possess virtues and vices peculiar to themselves. All the Americans have a natural propensity to sloth, but I gladly pronounce the Abiponian women entirely free from this foible. Every one must be astonished at their unwea-

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away his wife, or to marry more than one. For this reason they are extremely anxious to have themselves and their husbands baptized, that they may be rendered more certain of the perpetuity of their marriage. This must be understood only of the younger women; for the old ones, who are obstinate adherers to their ancient superstitions, and priestesses of the savage rites, strongly oppose the Christian religion, foreseeing that if it were embraced by the whole Abiponian nation, they should lose their authority, and become the scorn and the derision of all. The young men amongst the Abipones, as well as the old women, greatly withstood the progress of religion; for, burning with the desire of military glory and of booty, they are excessively fond of cutting off the heads of the Spaniards, and plundering their waggons and estates, which they know to be forbidden by the law of God. Hence, they had rather adhere to the institutes of their ancestors, and traverse the country on swift horses, than listen to the words of a priest within the walls of a church. If it depended upon the old men and the young women alone, the whole nation would long since have embraced our religion.

Honourable mention has been frequently made by me of the chastity of the Abiponian women:

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oagan, yet, however. *Encha klatùm keèn èúbnek, oagan netackaik:* Though this man is beautiful, yet he is cowardly. *Tán* means *because*, and *máoge*, therefore. *Tán ajte apatáye ken nepark, máoge chik ààtèkan:* Because there are many gnats in the plain, therefore I have not slept. *Men, men*, mean as, so. *Men netà, men naetaŕat*, As the father, so the son.

They have various exclamations of wonder, grief, joy, &c. *Kemen apalaik akami!* How stingy and tenacious of thy own property thou art! *Kemén naáchik*, or *Kimill naáchik!* Oh! how useful this will be to me! is their way of thanking you for a gift; for neither the Abipones nor Guaranies have any word whereby to express thanks. What wonder, since gratitude is unknown, even by name, among them, that they do not display it their actions? For, as some one observed, they think benefits like flowers—only pleasant as long as they are fresh. One repulse entirely effaces the memory of former benefits from the minds of the Indians. The Guaranies, on receiving a gift, use the same phrase, and say, *Aquiyebete ángà:* This will be useful to me. The Abipones, after obtaining what they ask, sometimes thanked the giver with nothing but the word *Kliri:* This is what I wanted. In wonder or compassion, they exclaim, *Kem ekemat! Ta yeegàm!* or

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the memory of their ancestors are religiously celebrated with the same rites and ceremonies. Should the memory of her dead mother enter a woman's mind, she immediately loosens her hair, seizes a gourd, paces up and down the street with some women whom she calls to partake in her mourning, and fills the air with lamentation. Few nights pass that you do not hear women mourning. This they do upon their feet, with their bodies turned towards the spot where the deceased is buried, always accompanying their lamentations with the sound of gourds. Women find weeping easier than silence, and this is the reason why the nights are so seldom passed in quietness. The vociferation, however, always grows more violent as the day approaches; for when one begins to lament another follows her example, then a third comes, and then a fourth, till, by daybreak, the number of mourners seems greater than that of sleepers. The men meantime are by no means idle. The grief which the women express with tears and shrieks, they testify by shedding the blood of enemies or their own. The nearest of kin to the deceased immediately assembles all the fellow-soldiers he can raise, and leads them against the foreign foes by whose hands his relation perished. It is

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136 any other part of Paraguay. Innumerable butterflies, of a beautiful variety of colours, adorn the sides of the rivers and woods, as flowers the meadows; but of these and other insects, many and accurate accounts have been already written, which are now in the hands of all. We must re-
[87] turn to the Abipones, more destructive to Paraguay than any insect, who, though looked upon by the Spaniards in the light of robbers and murderers, do nevertheless profess themselves warriors and heroes; whether justly or no, I leave to the arbitration of my readers, to whom I shall proceed to describe their military discipline and method of warfare.

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CHAPTER XXXIII.

OF THE MILITARY DISPOSITIONS OF THE ABIPONES.

I AM at a loss in what colours to paint the military dispositions of the Abipones; no word corresponds to the idea which long acquaintance with these savages has impressed on my mind. That the Abipones are warlike, prompt, and active, none even of the Spaniards ever doubted, but I should hesitate to call them valiant and intrepid. Cicero himself distinguishes an active from a brave man, in these words, 2. Philipp. *Ut cognosceret te, si minus fortem, attamen strenuum.* It is my purpose to write the history not the panegyric of the Abipones: I must therefore be sincere, and declare my real opinion, whatever it be.

Military fame is the principal object of the ambition of the Abipones. Their whole souls are bent upon arms. They can manage a spear, bow, and every kind of weapon with great dexterity, and ride on horseback with peculiar swiftness. No people with greater fortitude endures the hardships of war, the inclemencies of the sky, want of food, and the fatigues of travelling. They fearlessly swim across rivers formidable to

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181 sailors and ships. They look upon their wounds
703 without a groan, and with as much indifference
[147] as they would upon those of another person. They are acquainted with all those arts which every European soldier admires, but which so very few practise. This alone is unknown to
181 the Abipones, to despise death, and gain glory
703 by encountering danger. They boast of martial
761 souls, but are too unwilling to resign their lives. They are active, but can by no means be called brave, for a brave man would remain unterrified were the globe itself to fall in ruins, and would choose either to conquer or die. The Abipones always desire to conquer, but are never willing to die. They will curse a victory obtained at
[727] the expense of one of their countrymen's lives. They abhor triumphal hymns if mingled with funeral lamentations, and would reject a victory accompanied by the sighs of one mourning widow or orphan.

721 Certainly no one can accuse the Abipones of
181 rashness in venturing their lives. Their chief adorations are paid to the goddess Security, the arbitress of their battles, without whose approving sanction they will never risk an engagement. They carefully avoid a contest of uncertain issue. They always threaten others, always fear for themselves, and trust nothing to chance. Before they undertake a warlike

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expedition, they carefully consider the nature of the place, the numbers of their enemies, and the opportunity of the time. Any danger, or the least suspicion of it, will strike the spear from their hands, and extinguish all their ardour. Agis, King of Sparta, boasted that his soldiers, in the heat of war, did not enquire the number and strength of their antagonists, but where they were, that they might attack and put them to flight. The Abipones are never hurried into a combat with such blind impetuosity as this. They proceed cautiously, nor do the trumpets sound till all things have been diligently examined. When assured of their safety, they rush on like thunder, imitating now the cunning of Hannibal, now the delays of Fabius. They know that the daring are favoured by fortune, but not unless they exercise a sagacious foresight with regard to dangers. As persons about to cross a threatening river, try the ford that they may not be carried away by the current; so they never approach their enemies till after mature deliberation, that they may secure an unimperilled victory. The timidity of the Americans gives the name of rashness to what Europeans call courage. They think long and often upon what is to be done once. They never strike a blow which they have not previously contem-

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181 plated, and then it is with a hand trembling
721 at every noise. They seldom attack openly,
[726] but do it in general unawares. They dare little against the bold who front assailants, and are accustomed to keep strict watch. They never fear less than when they perceive themselves the objects of fear. Craft,
181 and the swiftness of their horses, more than
726 strength, were what gave them the power to commit so many slaughters. Though you
[727] may object to their cowardice, yet that method of warfare is surely admirable, and agreeable to military tactics, which enabled them, with no loss, or a very trifling one of their own soldiers, to return home victorious, laden with the heads of the Spaniards, and triumphantly displaying crowds of captives, cattle, and other spoils taken from the enemy. *Hæc ars*, says Vegetius, *dimicaturis est necessaria, per quam vitam retineant, et victoriam consequantur.* For this purpose, heroes themselves have used a sword, and a shield, with the one to offend the enemy, with the other to defend themselves. Cunning, agility, and the swiftness of their horses, were a shield, nay, better than any shield, to the Abipones. If they see one or two of their fellow-soldiers fall, they immediately fly. When straitened, and deprived of all means of escape, fear is converted into rage,

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and they fight with the utmost obstinacy. I shall now proceed to treat of their arms, scouts, councils of war, military provisions, hostile expeditions, various modes of fighting, customs on obtaining a victory, and lastly, of the slaughters committed by them in every part of the province.

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as it is possible to conceive. In every one of the Abipones, you would behold a thunder-bolt of war. Each thinks himself a Hector, an Epaminondas, a Hannibal; and such they might be believed by all who beheld their faces covered with blood-red stains to render them more terrific, their arms and breasts full of scars, and their threatening eyes, and who listened to their ferocious and slaughter-breathing words. But could we look into their breasts, we should perceive that they were different within from what they appeared without. We should discover a shell without a kernel, an ass in a lion's skin, an ignis fatuus under thundering words, and vain rage unsupported by strength. Though, no longer masters of themselves, they crawl on the ground in a state of intoxication, at your bidding they will climb to Heaven itself, they will tear away the hinges of the globe, and had all the human race but one neck, like Caligula, they would end it at a blow. Were they as courageous in battle, as vaunting in their cups, they would long since have extinguished the race of Spaniards in Paraguay. But as some one has observed, drunken bullies are better trumpeters than soldiers. They are all empty sound. Amidst their cups and their songs they are bold as lions, but in battle more cowardly than hares.

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727 628 725 Whenever an Abipon dies by the hand of an enemy, the nearest relation of the deceased takes upon him to avenge his death. It is his business to invite his countrymen and hordesmen, or even the inhabitants of another horde, to join their arms with his, to lead them against the enemy, and, when the attack is made, to go first into battle. As they lend assistance to friendly nations, they seek it in turn from them, either when they are preparing for war, or when they apprehend it from others whom they deem themselves unequal to contend with alone. But, as Europe so often experiences, little confidence is to be placed in auxiliary forces. [5?2] The friendship of the Indians is notoriously fickle and unsteady; for, as they enter into alliance merely with a view to their own advan- [181] tage, they will suddenly turn their backs on their greatest friends, should the hope of the smallest emolument preponderate.

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726 that we shall not die. The enemies must be sought and slain." So saying he leapt upon a horse, and armed with a gun hastened to succour that part of the city where the enemies were said to be raging. But lo and behold! when he arrives there, he finds the inhabitants all sound asleep, not even dreaming of the Abipones! Such was the terror excited in the Paraguayrians, not merely by the figures and presence of the Abipones, but by the very report of them.

181 726 Two things which long experience has taught me, I greatly wish impressed on the minds of all. The first is, that the Indians are never less to be dreaded than when they present themselves most terrible, and with the greatest noise. For all that frightful preparation only betrays the fears of the savages. Distrusting their courage, strength, and arms, they think that paint of various colours, feathers, shouting, trumpets, and other instruments of terror, will forward their success. But any one with a very moderate share of courage, and stock of armour, will despise all this as unworthy of fear. This is my first maxim. My second is, that the Indians are never more to be feared than when they seem most afraid. They sometimes lurk concealed, uttering no sound, and giving no intimation of their presence; but this silence is

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as sure a prognostic of an attack, as a calm is, in the ocean, of an impending storm. They arrive on a sudden, and surprize the self-secure. They imitate death, whose ministers they are, by coming when least expected. In the heat of 726
battle, the Abipones often take to flight, in the design of enticing the Spaniards to pursue them, that they may slay them, when they are separated and their ranks disturbed, though unable to do so as long as they are in order. Hence it not unfrequently happens, that they who thought themselves the victors are vanquished by the fugitives. They fly to marshes, woods, winding-ways, defiles of mountains, rocks, or bushes, which places the excellence of their steeds, and their skill in riding and swimming enable them quickly to cross; while the pursuing Spaniards, incumbered by their clothes and baggage, and often destitute of proper horses, are easily pierced with spears whilst separated from one another, and struggling with the water, the mud, and the other difficulties of the way. Not to mention other artifices, after committing slaughters, plundering houses, and killing the inhabitants, the Abipones feign departure, and seem to be hastening their flight; but when they are supposed many leagues distant, renew the assault, surprize the surviving Spaniards, and kill all they can. So that it is a certain fact,